

strengthen U.S.—Taiwan relations by encouraging travel between the two nations by high-level officials, and H.R. 3320, which directs the Secretary of State to develop a plan to regain Taiwan's observer status in the World Health Organization.

Adoption of these bills would underscore the United States' commitment to our relationship with Taiwan, and I encourage my colleagues to support them as well.

IN HONOR OF EUGENE AND RUTH ANN YINGER'S 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

### HON. LIZ CHENEY

OF WYOMING

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my congratulations to Eugene and Ruth Ann Yinger on their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

This significant benchmark is a symbol of their commitment to each other and to their family. I am happy to join their friends and family in extending my best to them on this special occasion.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my congratulations to Eugene and Ruth Ann on the celebration of their 50th Wedding Anniversary. I wish them the best today and for many more blessed years to come.

RECOGNIZING MS. MARIE COLEMAN'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE U.S. RAIL INDUSTRY

### HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to recognize Ms. Marie Coleman for her many years of service to the U.S. Rail Industry. On January 10, 2018, Marie will have dedicated 50 years of service to several prominent American railroads. With decades of success serving the people of Pennsylvania and Americans across the country, I know I will neither be the first, nor the last, to applaud her distinguished professional accomplishments.

Ms. Coleman began her career in 1968 with the Pennsylvania Railroad. Shortly thereafter, she moved to work for Penn Central, where she remained from the time of its founding until April 1976, when, through an Act of Congress, it was included in a merger to form the Consolidated Rail Corporation. There, she served in numerous roles for more than a decade from 1976 to 1998. In the 20 years since, she has served the Norfolk Southern railroad system.

A lifelong Pennsylvanian, Ms. Coleman is a proud railroader who has served under 11 different CEOs. Her unwavering dedication throughout her career helped bring an industry back from the brink of extinction to become a powerful catalyst for American economic growth. There is no doubt that Ms. Coleman's service to the U.S. Rail Industry contributed to its success.

We can all look to Ms. Marie Coleman as an example of how one person's professional

hard work and dedication can not only be a rewarding journey, but also help shape the future of one of America's most important industries.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Ms. Coleman on reaching this incredible milestone in her career and wishing her luck in her continued role at Norfolk Southern.

HONORING PATRICK McMULLEN

### HON. SUSAN W. BROOKS

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank Patrick McMullen for his service to the Committee on Ethics. Since 2011, Patrick's skill as a lawyer and manager has been integral to the Committee's important work enforcing the House ethics rules.

Patrick served as an Investigative Counsel for the Committee during the 112th and 113th Congresses. In that role he worked tirelessly to provide the Committee Members with fair and creative advice on difficult issues.

In the 114th Congress Patrick rose to become the Committee's Director of Investigations. In this role, he has managed a team of nonpartisan attorneys and investigators that successfully handled a busy docket of investigations. Throughout that time, he instilled in his team a dedication to uncovering the truth with care and impartiality.

At the House Ethics Committee, we are responsible for protecting the integrity of the House of Representatives. The staff works every day to increase the American people's confidence in Congress. The work of the Ethics Committee is done confidentially so people do not often know everything happening behind the scenes by our incredible, non-partisan staff. As Patrick prepares to leave the Committee, I appreciate this opportunity to recognize the great work he and his team have done. He truly has been a leader in our office and in increasing confidence in Congress.

While I am saddened by his departure from the Committee, I wish him well in his future endeavors.

HONORING PATRICK McMULLEN

### HON. THEODORE E. DEUTCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to thank Patrick McMullen for his service to the Committee on Ethics. Patrick has been a dedicated public servant, and has worked hard to ensure that all House Members, officers, and staff meet the highest ethical standards.

During his tenure with the Committee's investigations team, the Committee has conducted more than 225 investigations. As Director of Investigations, he has helped the Committee assemble and has overseen a terrific team of nonpartisan attorneys and professional staff who make this possible.

Patrick's commitment to conducting fair, thorough, and nonpartisan investigations and leading the investigations team with these

principles has been an asset to the Committee and its Members as they carry out the Committee's important service to the House and the public.

On behalf of a grateful Committee, we thank him for his service and wish him all the best in his transition to the next phase of his career.

REPORT TO CONGRESS REGARDING THE ARIZONA BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT PLANNING CONVENTION

### HON. PAUL A. GOSAR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, it is with great satisfaction and pride that I report the outcome of the first formally authorized national Convention of State Legislatures to convene in 156 years. The "Arizona Balanced Budget Amendment (BBA) Planning Convention" was held September 12–15, 2017 in the chamber of the Arizona House of Representatives. The purpose of the convention was to discuss and plan for an eventual Article V—convention of states to propose a federal balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

The convention was formally called by the Arizona legislature's passage of HCR2022 sponsored by the Arizona Speaker of the House, J.D. Mesnard, on March 16, 2017. Pursuant to that resolution, the purpose of the convention was to create a proposed set of rules for adoption by and to govern a future single subject Article V convention to propose a BBA. Additionally, delegates were instructed to address the logistics involved in preparing for and participating in an upcoming Article V BBA convention. This report is intended to inform the work of the Arizona BBA Planning Convention and highlight areas of importance.

The Arizona BBA Planning Convention has created a roadmap for future conventions to draw upon when they convene, and has provided a sense of security to those who questioned the ability of State delegates to hold a convention that would address solely its single purpose and nothing more. It was an important endeavor that deserves proper cataloging in the appropriate annals to include the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, the Library of Congress, the National Archives, State Libraries, and the participating State Legislatures' records. I submit this congressional report and ask that you consider the work of the delegates as legitimate and pertinent.

In keeping with the traditions of past national conventions, the Arizona BBA Planning Convention has encouraged delegations to create a report of the convention to their state. Georgia, Michigan and Minnesota, among others, are states whose delegates have provided a comprehensive assessment. We encourage them to submit their work to the above archives as well, and hope to preserve this work and encourage more national conventions on a variety of topics in the future.

Therefore, I include in the RECORD a report to Congress in regard to Arizona balanced budget amendment:

It is with great confidence that I believe each member of Congress possesses the same depth of gratitude for the work of our

Founding Fathers as those of us who attended this first fully authorized convention of states since the Civil War. We are all tasked with the grand responsibility to govern the people. In doing so, we reach with one hand into the future to focus on protecting the prosperity of our children's children, and with our other hand we reach to the past to learn and explore what happened so that we are better able to protect and preserve the vision of those who built this great Republic.

One such visionary was Col. George Mason, who insisted that the States should also be able to propose amendments to the Constitution. He imagined that there would come a time when the Legislatures would be called upon to take appropriate action, and that there ought to be a second mechanism to update our founding document should the need arise. This method has recently gained interest and popularity across the country, and for several years State Legislators have been examining the viability of such an exercise.

It can be legitimately argued that the time George Mason envisioned is before us. The momentum is increasing and the reality of an Article V Convention of States is becoming ever apparent. Greater Legislators than I were aware of the need to prepare the way in advance, and it has been an honor to join them in that effort. We hope to work together with Congress to restore fiscal accountability through the requirement of a balanced budget, and preparing a proposed set of rules for the Balanced Budget Amendment Convention is our gift to future delegates to make that process easier.

We present this report to you in hopes that you will consider the work that has been accomplished thus far. The Phoenix Correspondence Commission was created as an outgrowth of this convention, and as a founding member of that Commission, I look forward to beginning the conversation needed to prepare for the much-anticipated Article V Convention of States.

"We face the most predictable economic crisis in history." That was the conclusion of Erskine Bowles, co-chair of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform (Simpson-Bowles Commission), to the U.S. Senate Budget Committee on March 8, 2011. At the time of this ominous warning to the nation in 2011, the national debt had just eclipsed \$14 trillion. It took 206 years for our nation to amass \$1 trillion in debt; it has increased by over \$6 trillion in the just the last seven years. Had Congress acted on the commission's proposal, it would have reduced the national debt by \$4 trillion over a decade and put Social Security solidly on the road to solvency. Congress ignored this unequivocal national wake up call. "The fiscal path we are on today is simply not sustainable," Bowles said. "This debt and these deficits that we are incurring on an annual basis are like a cancer and they are going to truly destroy this country from within unless we have the common sense to do something about it." States are exercising the common sense to do something about it. Acting under Article V of the U.S. Constitution, 28 of the required 34 States have now called for a convention of states to propose a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution in order to avert this "most predictable economic crisis in history." In September of 2016, at the call of the Arizona Legislature, 19 States convened in their official capacity to propose rules for conducting an Article V balanced budget convention of states.

We call upon Congress, the States, and people of good faith everywhere to extend their utmost efforts to support this constitutional remedy for curing the national fiscal "cancer" before the exponentially increasing national debt "destroy[s] this nation from within."

The Phoenix convention was instructive in preparing for a future Article V BBA convention. We learned much about the process of communicating with the state legislatures and the need to continue to educate them on the logistics of a convention. We were encouraged from the manner in which the delegates conducted themselves that any future convention, like Phoenix, will stick to its task and never "run away" as Article V naysayers assert. The nature of delegate appointment process and the rules, in addition to numerous other safeguards, simply won't allow for it.

As a result of the Arizona convention, including the establishment of the Phoenix Correspondence Commission, the states as a group are positioned to assist Congress in counting the number of live Article V BBA applications in place, in assisting with identifying a time and location for a future BBA convention to be held, in addressing any legal issues which may arise concerning the calling of such a convention, in preparing language for an appropriate resolution to be passed by Congress fulfilling its mandatory obligation to call the convention when the threshold number of states have applied and to otherwise assist Congress in performing its duties pursuant to Article V of the United States Constitution.

At present, twenty-eight (28) states have passed (and not rescinded) Article V applications calling for a convention to propose a balanced budget amendment. As we approach the two-thirds threshold triggering the call of a convention, we stand ready to work cooperatively with Congress in moving forward with this historic endeavor.

I authored the resolution calling for a Balanced Budget Amendment Planning Convention in Phoenix because I love this country. I believe it to be the greatest nation that has ever existed, but I am greatly concerned that our country is not on a sustainable fiscal path. Contrary to what some would like us to believe, the responsibility to get our fiscal house in order does not just rest with Congress, nor is Congress the end-all-be-all for governing this country.

In fact, a critical responsibility of the states in this great Union is in helping to keep our federal government in check. That value of Federalism was a bedrock principle that our Founding Fathers captured in the design of government put forth in the Constitution of the United States, over two centuries ago. I believe it is time for the states to start flexing our constitutional muscles, just as our Founding Fathers envisioned. And one vital tool for facilitating that, was instilled by our Founders in Article V of the Constitution. That is, the power of the states to propose amendments, especially as a means of constraining the power of the federal government. In 1798, then Vice President Thomas Jefferson, in correspondence with a state legislator, wrote, "I wish it were possible to obtain a single amendment to our Constitution. I would be willing to depend on that alone for the reduction of the administration of our government; I mean an additional article taking from the Federal Government the power of borrowing." While it might be more than two centuries late, I hope that soon we will be able to give President Jefferson his wish—for our own sake.

All fifty state legislatures were invited to attend the Arizona BBA Planning Convention. The Arizona planning committee actively sought a delegation from each state and was fully inclusive in their efforts to host a bi-partisan event. HCR2022 specifically required that the delegations be chosen by resolution of the legislature or by formal joint appointment by the leadership in both houses of their respective state legislatures. This was to ensure that the delegation was

authorized to speak and vote on behalf of their state Legislature. Delegates who were not listed on their State's approved delegation list were not seated. The meeting consisted of officially approved delegates from 19 state legislatures, with delegates from three additional states observing. Committees established to fulfill the requirements of HCR2022 were as follows: The Rules Drafting Committee; The Planning Committee, which was divided into two sub-committees: A Sub-committee on Ethics which was formed to address the impact and management of outside influence on the convention process and A Subcommittee on Delegates and Correspondence to assist in planning for a future BBA convention. A synopsis of the product of the Rules Committee is as follows: Produced a model set of rules for an Article V convention to propose a BBA. Some components of the set of model rules were as follows: The Article V convention shall be limited in scope to the balanced budget amendment. Governing rules provide for appropriate order and conduct during a BBA Article V convention which include, but are not limited to, the following: Duties of the officers. A quorum is a majority of the states in attendance. Each state shall be given only one vote, as has been the precedent in all preceding state conventions. Order of business and names of committees. The cost of the convention to be divided equally among the states in attendance.

A synopsis of the Planning Committee is as follows: Recommendations for protecting the integrity of an Article V Convention. Non-delegates should not be permitted on the Chamber Floor, Members' Lounge, etc., and should only be permitted in public areas. Any interaction of Convention leadership and staff with non-delegate individuals or organizations that pertains to Convention business or process should be strictly prohibited, with the exception of the press. Convention communications should only include official activities. States should consider extending their ethics restrictions (i.e. lobbying, food, gifts, etc.) to delegates serving within a convention, in addition to any ethics standards imposed by Convention rules. Sub-Committee on Delegates and Correspondence reported the following: In anticipation of the call for a convention for proposing amendments, states are strongly encouraged to enact delegate selection legislation at the earliest opportunity. The Phoenix Correspondence Commission (PCC) was created. The PCC will consist of commissioners appointed by the states to carry out the following functions to organize a convention for proposing amendments: Creating a single point of contact to act as a liaison with Congress. Track all applications for a convention for proposing amendments. Create a process to suggest to Congress a time and place for a convention for proposing amendments. Provide a process for legal representation, if necessary. Perform tasks as needed to organize the convention. Each state is strongly encouraged to appoint a commissioner to the PCC to communicate on all matters associated with a convention for proposing amendments with any or all of the following: State Legislators, United States Citizens, Convention Organizers, State Congressional Delegations, and Congress. The members of the PCC will be initially comprised of one member appointed from each delegation present at this Arizona Balanced Budget Amendment Planning Convention, until such time as each commissioner's state formally appoints a commissioner to the PCC or declines to do the same.

CONGRATULATING BRIGADIER  
GENERAL CHRISTOPHER  
FINERTY UPON HIS PROMOTION  
TO BRIGADIER GENERAL

### HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank Brigadier General Christopher E. Finerty for his outstanding service to our country and congratulate him on his promotion to Brigadier General in the United States Air Force. General Finerty has worked closely with me, the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee and across Capitol Hill to inform and advise the Congress so that we may ensure a strong and ready National Guard. He has also helped the Pentagon work more productively with Congress, promoting a strong and efficient national defense.

General Finerty has done this work selflessly. He quietly, but tenaciously advocates for the Chief of the National Guard Bureau's priorities to make the National Guard a ready, capable force for operations in the homeland and overseas.

General Finerty's promotion grows from a career of accomplishments and experience. Prior to becoming the head of the National Guard Bureau's Office of Legislative Liaison, where he works directly for the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, General Finerty was Vice Commander of the Air National Guard Readiness Center and simultaneously the Commander of the 201st Mission Support Squadron, which together oversee personnel and policy across the country. He has previous tours in the National Guard Bureau's legislative liaison office, the Air Force congressional budget liaison office, and on the Air National Guard staff. He logged over 3,300 hours piloting HH-60 rescue helicopters and flew 45 combat missions. General Finerty is a 1992 graduate of the United States Air Force Academy.

General Finerty dedicates all of his time and energy to his work, with two exceptions—his children, Ryan and Kate. General Finerty's first priority are his children, and no father could be more devoted. Kate and Ryan inspire and strengthen him.

Please join me in congratulating General Finerty on his well-earned promotion and in expressing our gratitude for his selfless service.

### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to have my votes recorded on the House floor on Tuesday January 9, 2018. Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of H.R. 4581, H.R. 4564 and H. Res. 676.

### MORE MONEY, LESS PROBLEMS

### HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I was grateful to learn that Tide-water Boats, led by Jimmy Metts, is investing \$8.3 million to expand their manufacturing facility in Lexington, South Carolina. This investment will create 100 new jobs.

This news is on top of AFLAC announcing that they will be expanding their 700 employees in Columbia, South Carolina, managed by Daniel Lebish, and doubling their employee 401K matching funds.

On the same day Republicans passed historic tax cuts, AT&T led by Pam Lackey announced they are providing 200,000 employees a \$1,000 bonus. Comcast, whose leader in South Carolina is Douglas Guthrie, will be providing \$1,000 bonuses to 100,000 employees. BB&T, a valued corporate citizen led by Mike Brennan, will be raising their employee wages to \$15 an hour and providing a \$1,200 bonus for 27,000 employees.

Boeing of Charleston, led by Joan Robinson-Berry, announced they will be donating \$100 million to charity that focuses on education, local communities, veterans and military personnel.

But the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act is not only for businesses. I appreciate that next month, American families will see more of their own money in their paychecks.

In conclusion, God Bless our Troops, and we will never forget September 11th in the Global War on Terrorism.

Best wishes to Chairman DARRELL ISSA and Kathy Issa for their dedicated service as they announce their retirement. We look forward to their continued service for the American people.

### IN RECOGNITION OF A SUCCESSFUL IDAHO CONSERVATION PROGRAM

### HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2018

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an important conservation program taking place in central Idaho that was created as part of the Sawtooth National Recreation Area and Jerry Peak Wilderness Additions Act. I also want to acknowledge the outstanding cooperation between Idaho conservationists and ranchers that have made this program a success.

The signing of the law in 2015 created three new wilderness areas totaling over 429 square miles. This jewel in the heart of Idaho was protected for future generations to enjoy. It also returned significant amounts of wilderness study areas back to multiple use allowing individuals and families to engage in outdoor and recreational activities for years to come.

When I began working on the Boulder-White Clouds bill nearly 20 years ago, ranchers on the East Fork of the Salmon River were facing significant headwinds to their traditional way of life. Lawsuits, federal regulations, and other

obstacles were making it difficult to graze on their federal allotments. In many instances, their allotted animal unit months (AUMs) had been significantly reduced and in some cases completely eliminated. The trend going forward was not positive.

It became clear to me that providing opportunities for the ranching families to continue their livelihoods would be critical to a final outcome. A final bill would need to provide area ranchers with options that could help them reset their grazing operations and provide greater certainty for them in the future.

To meet this need, we developed a program in which area ranchers could voluntarily retire individual allotments that might not be economically viable to their ongoing ranching operations in exchange for compensation from a private third party.

This program specified that agreements were to be voluntary, that ranchers would be paid for all of the AUMs on their allotment and that funding would come from third party private entities and not the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to say that last month marked the completion of the initial phase of voluntary retirements.

In the past year, four families have retired five allotments and received over \$1.35 million in private compensation. Some of these allotments were proving difficult to use and were marginally viable in their traditional operations. Through our program, the ranchers were paid for every AUM on each allotment.

On the conservation side, over 126,000 acres of pristine and ecologically important areas that include winter and summer range for elk and deer, important sage grouse habitat, and some of the highest elevation spawning habitat for ocean-going salmon and steelhead found anywhere will no longer be grazed. These were high conflict areas that have experienced past litigation and would probably see future litigation or regulation.

I am very pleased to say that the voluntary retirement program has been a success and a win for both the ranchers and for conservation. While the initial third party funding for the voluntary retirement program has expired, the mechanism still exists for ranchers to retire allotments in the future, should they so choose. In doing so, they will be free to enter into new agreements with new terms. These future agreements will be of their own accord between the ranchers and conservation interests.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the following organizations and individuals for their contributions to the voluntary retirement program.

The Idaho Conservation League were the backbone behind the voluntary grazing retirement program. The legislation provided the mechanism for the voluntary retirements and they provided the muscle, resources, and expertise to carry out this initial batch of retirements.

I want to give special thanks to Rick Johnson, the Executive Director of the Idaho Conservation League. Rick worked very closely with my staff and me as we developed the program. He made sure the grant funding was in place prior to passage of the legislation so that promises made to the ranchers would be kept after the bill became law. Rick has been a true friend and partner from start to finish in this process.

A very big thanks and well done go to John Robison, Public Lands Director of the Idaho